THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Prior to 1985 Taj Mahal was opened during the night upto 10 p.m. and during moon lit days it was extended upto midnight (12.00). Due to threat perception and after a thorough study by the security agencies and on the basis of recommendations of the district administration, Taj Mahal was allowed to open upto 7 p.m. only.

(c) to (e) The Government of Uttar Pradesh approached the Hon'ble Supreme court to accord permission to open Taj Mahal during night. The Hon'ble Supreme court in its interim order dated 12/12/1999 directed that the Taj Mahal shall not be opened to visitors for night viewing and *status quo* shall be maintained. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has asked the State Government to improve the security measures around Taj Mahal. The U.P. Government, as part of their proposals to celebrate 350 years of Taj this year have now again proposed to keep Taj Mahal open for visitors for five nights a month. C.I.S.F has submitted a proposal to upgrade security measures inside the Taj Mahal.

Decaying of Surya Temple of Katarmal in Uttaranchal

†1968. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that Surya Temple of Katarmal at Almora in Uttaranchal is constantly decaying; and

(b) if so, the details of the action plan for preservation of the temple and arresting decay?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Surya temple of Katarmal at Almora has developed a crack on one side. An estimate amounting to Rs. 57.17 lakhs has been approved to undertake the comprehensive conservation measures for its preservation and arresting further decay.

Permission for Sound and Light Shows

1969. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether any request from the Government of Andhra Pradesh has been received by Government for giving permission to conduct sound and light show at the thousand pillared temple in Warrangal district of the State;

(b) if so, when such a proposal was received by Government; and

(c) the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIS. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The proposal was received in the Year 2001.

(c) Archaeological Survey of India cannot spare any space towards installation of transformer and construction of control room in view of on going work of reconstruction of Kalyana Mandapa and also repairs to Rudreswara temple. After the repairs are completed, a decision will be taken on the proposal, keeping the need to continue the rituals and space constraints in view.

Recognition to Qauwali

1970. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Qauwali is a very popular and traditional form of vocal music in the country and if so, what Government have done to promote and help this form of Music;

(b) how many qauwals, who perform day and night at most of sufisants mausoleums have been given any kind of assistance by Government; and

(c) how many of them were given Padm-Shree and any other recognition from Government so far?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government has been promoting Qauwali mainly through the Sangeet Natak Akademi. In the Annual Lok Utsav Festivals held by Sangeet Natak Akademi in 1986, 1987, 1988 and 1990 and in Bhakti Sangeet held in Delhi and Patiala, Qauwali has been presented. The Sangeet Natak Akademi has also done audio and video documentation of Qauwali.